

## REMARKS

In the Office Action, claims 1-9 were objected to because of informalities. Claims 1, 2, 4 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Williamson et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,941,106). Claims 1-3 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Williamson et al. in view of Hosmer (U.S. Pat. No. 5,686,899). Claims 6 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Williamson et al. in view of either Butt (U.S. Pat. No. 3,913,263) or Hatcher (U.S. Pat. No. 2,765,648). Claims 6 and 7 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Williamson et al. in view of Hosmer, as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of either Butts or Hatcher. Claims 8 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Williamson et al. in view of either Butts or Hatcher, as applied to claim 7 above, and further in view of Hughes (U.S. Pat. No. 3,772,574). Claims 8 and 9 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Williamson et al. in view of Hosmer and either Butts or Hatcher, as applied to claim 7 above, and further in view of Hughes.

The present application is for a locking system for preventing child access to cupboards, cabinets, drawers and the like. The system includes a power source, a plurality of locking mechanisms and a plurality of corresponding switches. One switch actuates one corresponding locking mechanism.

A remote actuator is capable of signaling the switches one switch at a time. The remote actuator signals a switch by being proximate to the switch. In this way the remote actuator is capable of signaling an individual switch and therefore actuating a corresponding individual locking mechanism.

Each locking mechanism also incorporates a connection in which a master override switch may be connected.

The master override switch provides the capability to override the individual switches and actuate all locking mechanisms connected in the system at once.

The present application therefore teaches a system in which one lock may be unlocked at a time, with other locks in the system remaining in the locked state. Also, all locks may be simultaneously unlocked by actuating the master switch.

The system may also be arranged such that multiple switches corresponding to multiple locks may be located proximate to each other so that the remote actuator is capable of actuating multiple locks at one time.

There are therefore a minimum of three methods in which the system of the present application may be actuated; (1) individual locks may be actuated individually by the remote sensor, (2) all locks may be actuated simultaneously by the master switch, and (3) multiple locks may be actuated by the remote sensor simultaneously, with other locks remaining in the locked state. There is of course many ways in

which a system of the present application comprising only a small number of locking mechanisms may be arranged for operation by the remote actuator.

37 CFR 1.83(a)

Page 2, lines 1 – 4 of the Office Action

The features of claim 3 are a reed switch and a magnetic actuator. A reed switch is indicated in Figure 5. The magnetic actuator may take any shape without altering its function. Accordingly, one of ordinary skill in the art would understand the use and appearance of a magnetic actuator.

Claim 4 has been cancelled.

Page 2, lines 19 – 21 and page 3, lines 1 – 7 of the Office Action

Claim 1 has been amended to clearly indicate which integers are included in the claim. The Examiner's comments regarding the confusion of claiming a plurality of locking systems yet later claiming a single locking mechanism has been addressed. Grammatical errors have been corrected.

Other grammatical errors in the dependent claims have been addressed either directly or by amendment addressing the Examiner's objections under the following sections of the Office Action. Dependent claims have been amended to make them consistent with the amendments to claim 1.

Claim 1 has been amended to comprise a plurality of locking mechanisms, a power source or power source input for connecting a power source to the locking system, a plurality of switches coupled between the power source and a corresponding locking mechanism, and a remote actuator capable of *individually signaling* said switches *one switch at a time* by bringing the remote actuator *in signal proximity* to a switch. References to proximity in claim 1 have been qualified by adding that the remote actuator must be in signal proximity to a switch.

Williamson teaches a locking system whereby all locks in the system are unlocked by a remote actuator not proximate to the switches corresponding to each locking mechanism. The remote actuator is not capable of unlocking switches individually.

There is only one way in which the Williamson system may be operated. Williamson's system can only operate all locks simultaneously. Williamson therefore teaches away from the system of the present application. Williamson's system does not have the benefit of having multiple ways in which the system can be operated, as taught by the present application.

Claim 11 has been added to further claim that the remote actuator is in signal proximity to the switch when it is placed adjacent a cabinet.

Williamson's system teaches a more complicated system compared to that of the present application. The Examiner has incorrectly identified switches 1400, 1402, 1404 and 1406 as switches that correspond to a plurality of corresponding locking mechanisms. Switches 1400, 1402, 1404 and 1406 are necessary to operate a single locking mechanism.

In Williamson's system, the locking mechanism must be energized to lock as well as energized to unlock. The system of the present application is energized to unlock only. With respect to claim 5, when the remote actuator is outside signal proximity of a switch the locking mechanism will lock. Williamson therefore teaches away from this idea.

35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Page 4, lines 5 – 11 of the Office Action

Hosmer teaches a single lock system for a securing a truck door. The system includes a magnetic reed switch actuated by a magnet, the reed switch actuating a solenoid. Hosmer does not teach a locking system with a plurality of locks for preventing child access to a plurality of cabinets or the like, nor does he teach a system with a master override switch.

The present application is inventive over Williamson in view of Hosmer. The applicant believes that it is not obvious to substitute a reed switch and magnet for the transmitter and antenna of Williamson. Williamson teaches away from such proximate operation by magnet and magnetic reed switch, and teaches a remote operation whereby all switches are actuated simultaneously.

Furthermore, Hosmer's system is directed at locking a truck door, and is therefore not related in application to the locking of household cabinets and the like.

Page 4, lines 12 – 19 and page 5, lines 1 – 9 of the Office Action

Hatcher teaches a vehicle door locking system. The control philosophy for this system is similar to that of Williamson in that a switch actuates all locks simultaneously. It is not possible to actuate a lock individually. There are two switches wired in parallel. The two switches provide the user with the choice of which switch to use (presumably external to the vehicle by key, and internal to the vehicle by lever). Neither switch is an override switch as both perform the same function. One switch does not override the other.

The locking system of the present application includes an override switch. While this override switch is actuated, the individual reed switches are redundant.

The locking system of the present application is inventive over Williamson in view of Hatcher, and Williamson in view of Hosmer and further in view of Hatcher.

Butt teaches a complex mechanical device with many linkages, levers and cams, operated by a gear motor for locking cell doors. Butt teaches of a vastly different system compared to that of the present application. Butt's system:

- is aimed at a vastly different application compared to that of the present application,

- has complex mechanical elements,
- is not aimed at preventing a child's access to household cabinets and the like,
- does not use a single remote actuator to individually unlock individual locking mechanisms, and

- has operating elements very different to those of the system of the present application (such as a gear motor compared to a solenoid).

The locking system of the present application is inventive over Williamson in view of Butt, and Williamson in view of Hosmer and further in view of Butt.

Page 5, lines 10 – 22 and page 6, lines 1 – 2 of the Office Action

Hughes teaches a combination type locking mechanism. The lock is controlled by a magnetic array which must be actuated in a predetermined sequence within a predetermined time. If a wrong 'combination' is entered the lock is disabled for a period of time.

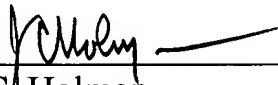
This patent publication is not particularly relevant to the present application.

Based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the claims in the present application, as they now stand, patentably distinguish over the references cited and applied by the Examiner and are, therefore, in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance is in order, and such favorable action and reconsideration are respectfully requested.

However, if after reviewing the above amendments and remarks, the Examiner has any questions or comments, he is cordially invited to contact the undersigned attorneys.

Respectfully submitted,

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